

THEIR HISTORY AND CULTURE

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In an earlier chapter something has been said about the history and recent status of the education of the new type. It will be recalled that Protestant missionaries were its leading pioneers. Before the China-Japanese War of 1894-1895 their schools enjoyed no wide patronage, for they were not of the kind to which boys would go for preparation for the civil service examinations. Their students were recruited largely from church members or from those too poverty-stricken to afford an education elsewhere. Their graduates usually found employment either in the service of a Christian mission or in business houses engaged in foreign trade. With the "reform movement" which began about 1895, missionary schools, as the best places in China in which the now highly desired Western education could be acquired, rose quickly to popularity. In the twenty-five years after the defeat of China by the powers in 1900 they had a very rapid growth, for in mental and moral discipline and as a place in which to acquire Western learning the best of them, especially the secondary and higher institutions, were equal and usually superior to the best non-Christian ones in their communities. In the meantime private and government schools of the new *type* have increased even more rapidly. Their growth has been retarded by the civil strife and foreign invasions of the past fifteen or twenty years, but in places continues. Indeed, it has had a phenomenal expansion in "free" China. For a time the rising tide of nationalism regarded the mission schools as part of a foreign, "imperialistic" invasion, agitated for the "recovery of educational rights," and between 1926 and 1932 compelled most of them to register with the Government—the terms being state supervision, the placing of

all religious
teaching on a voluntary and extra-curricular basis,
and the direc-
tion of each by a Chinese principal and by a board a
majority of
whose members are Chinese. As government and
private schools
have multiplied in numbers and improved in
efficiency, mission
schools have declined in relative importance.

It will also be recalled that thousands of Chinese
youth have
studied or are studying abroad—in Japan,
Europe, and Amer-
ica—as large a student migration from any one
country as the
world has ever seen.

It will be remembered, too, that students have
taken an active
part in politics, sometimes as the tools of older
manipulators, b»*
more than once prominently and decisively—
notably in the pres*